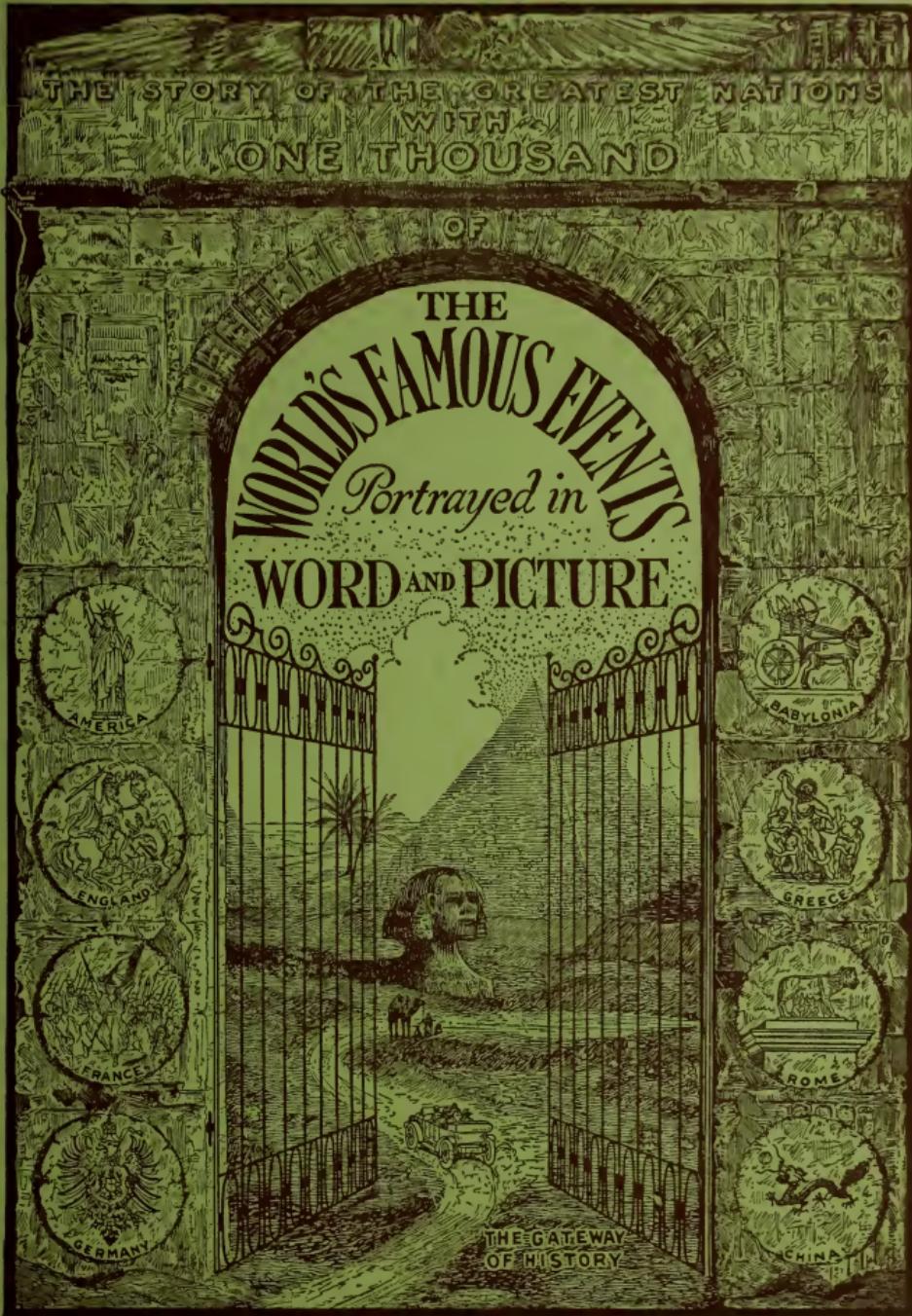


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THE FIRST MARAUDING ARMY

(*The Soldiers of Count Mansfield Live Upon the Country*)

After the painting by Ferdinand Leeke, of Munich, born 1859

FOR a time the Bohemians were successful in their warfare against Catholic coercion, but after a while the Emperor Rudolf II gathered against them all the Catholic forces of the empire, and as the Protestants of other districts lent their brethren little help, Bohemia was completely crushed. Then the struggle spread to other parts of Germany; for the Emperor had secretly determined to eradicate Protestantism wholly from his empire.

A Protestant army headed by Count Ernest of Mansfield escaped from Bohemia and continued fighting in the Rhine country. Mansfield had no means of support, so he let his men plunder as they marched. It made little difference to him whether he found himself in the territory of friend or foe: his troops must live. Masterless men flocked to him from all over Germany. His army became little better than a company of brigands. Yet he remained the chief support of the Protestant cause in Germany, until an even abler general than he raised a similar self-supporting army to fight upon the Catholic side. This was the celebrated general Wallenstein. He completely defeated Mansfield and dispersed his army. Then Wallenstein's troops in their turn plundered and desolated defenceless Germany until the Emperor compelled their general to disband them and retire to his home. These marauding armies left the country almost a desert.







GENERAL TILLY'S DEATH

(The Catholics' Chief General Meets Defeat and Death at the Battle of the Lech)

From a painting by the German artist, P. F. Messerschmidt

W ALLENSTEIN'S victories had left the Catholics masters of the empire; but the Protestants of northern Germany obtained help from outside, from England, from the Protestant king of Denmark, and finally from the great Protestant general and hero, King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. Wallenstein had been sent to his home in disgrace, and this left as the chief commander on the Catholic side, General Tilly. He was a strange little man, so ugly that his rude soldiers thought he was the devil himself, a belief which he encouraged by his trickeries, his avarice, and by wearing always a long red feather in his cap. Yet he was a most able general and defeated all the Protestants and captured and burned their cities until he was matched against Gustavus Adolphus.

The Swedish king defeated Tilly in two great battles. The second and most decisive of these was fought in 1632 near Augsburg in southern Germany, after Gustavus had swept all northern Germany clear of the Catholic forces. To reach Augsburg, Gustavus fought his way in masterly fashion across the Lech River in face of Tilly's veteran troops. Tilly himself was mortally wounded by a cannon shot and died a few days later. He was seventy-three years old and had for forty years been the ablest and most dreaded general in southern Germany.







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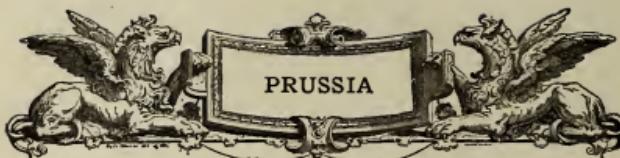
THE DEATH OF KING GUSTAVUS
(*The Hero is Killed in the Moment of Victory at Lutzen*)
From a painting by the Bavarian artist, Ludwig Braun

THE overthrow of Tilly left the Catholic cause in desperate straits, and the Emperor Rudolf had no choice but to recall Wallenstein to his aid. Wallenstein had been living in retirement, almost in banishment; and he refused to reenter the struggle except upon terms which made him an independent chieftain, the equal of the Emperor. His astonishing demands having been acceded to, Wallenstein by the mere magic of his name, drew around him another army of marauders. These he led against Gustavus.

Thus in the fall of 1632 these two remarkable generals, undoubtedly the ablest soldiers of their time, were matched against each other. Neither underrated the other. They fought one indecisive conflict, and then met in a desperate final battle at Lutzen. For hours the strife swayed equally to and fro. Then the Swedes had the better of it, their foes began to flee. At this moment King Gustavus, riding unceasingly too far forward, was surrounded by a little group of the enemy's cavalry. They did not recognize him, and attacked him only as one of the enemy. Both he and his esquire were slain. His death infuriated the Swedes, who loved him devotedly, and instead of retreating they fought the more resolutely. Wallenstein fled with his army back to Bohemia.







THE HOHENZOLLERNS

(The Line of Hohenzollern Rulers Who Built up Brandenburg to Become the Prussia of Today)

From a series of portraits, prepared specially for this history

FTER the death of King Gustavus, the desolating Thirty Years War still dragged along for many years. Both sides were too exhausted to make any very powerful effort. Wallenstein was accused of treachery, and was slain by his own officers. The war continued chiefly through the intrigues of the French prime minister Richelieu, who sent money to the Protestants so as to aid them in weakening the power of the Hapsburg emperors.

In the last years of the war a new power became prominent in northern Germany. This was the Electorate of Brandenburg, known to-day as the Kingdom of Prussia, and ruled by the Hohenzollerns. You will recall how the Hohenzollerns, originally a south German family, had purchased possession of Brandenburg in 1415. Two hundred years of rule had widened their domains and endeared them to their people. Now one of these Electors, Frederick William, known as the Great Elector, came into his inheritance and proved himself the ablest man in north Germany. He took an important part in closing the Thirty Years War with a general treaty of peace. His son afterward got the Brandenburg title altered to that of King of Prussia; and each Hohenzollern since, as our picture of them shows, has been a prominent figure in German history.





IV-28

Frederick William II.
Frederick William IV.
Frederick II.

The Great Elector
Frederick I
William II.
William I

Frederick William III.
Frederick III.
Frederick William I.



THE GREAT ELECTOR AT FEHRBELLIN

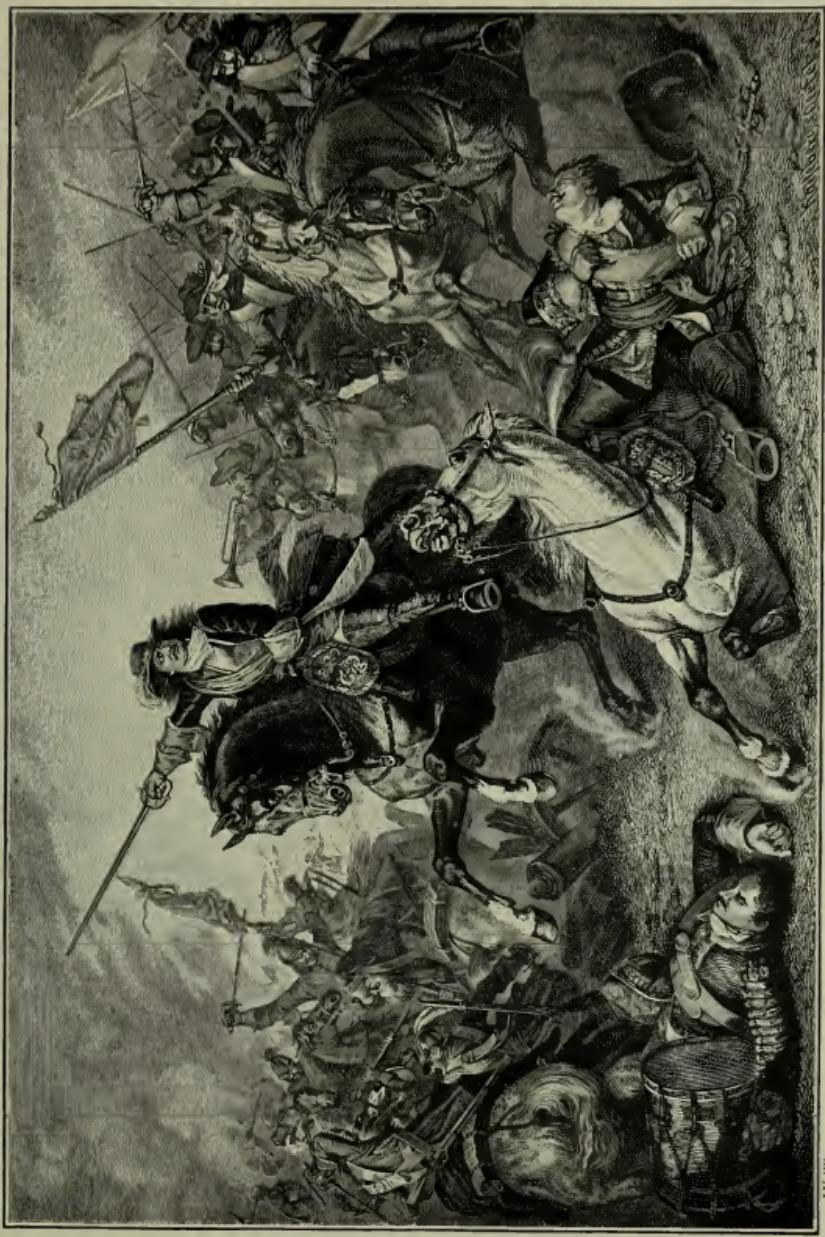
(*Frederick of Brandenburg Saves His Domains from the Swedes*)

From an anonymous picture in an old manuscript

THE reign of the "Great Elector" was a long and notable one. Having secured peace for his province by the closing of the Thirty Years War, he set himself to restore the prosperity of his people. In Brandenburg alone of all Germany were the scars of the long religious war rapidly obliterated. The Elector also stood as a tower of strength protecting Germany from the aggressions of the French monarch Louis XIV, who had now risen to power.

The strength and unity of the German Empire had been so completely destroyed by the desolating war that France was now the chief state of Europe. Louis XIV even hoped to be elected Emperor of Germany, but was foiled by the Great Elector. In revenge Louis formed a plot against Frederick. By a pretence of attack from France, all Frederick's troops were drawn to the French frontier. Then the Swedes invaded Brandenburg from the north. It seemed certain that the whole province would be captured. But the peasantry, who loved Frederick, rose in a mass to resist the Swedes; and the Elector rode like a whirlwind from one of his frontiers to the other, and suddenly attacked the Swedes at Fehrbellin. Only a few cavalry troops had been able to keep up with Frederick in his remarkable journey; but so unexpected was his attack that the Swedes broke and fled. Brandenburg was saved.







THE FOUNDING OF THE PRUSSIAN NAVY

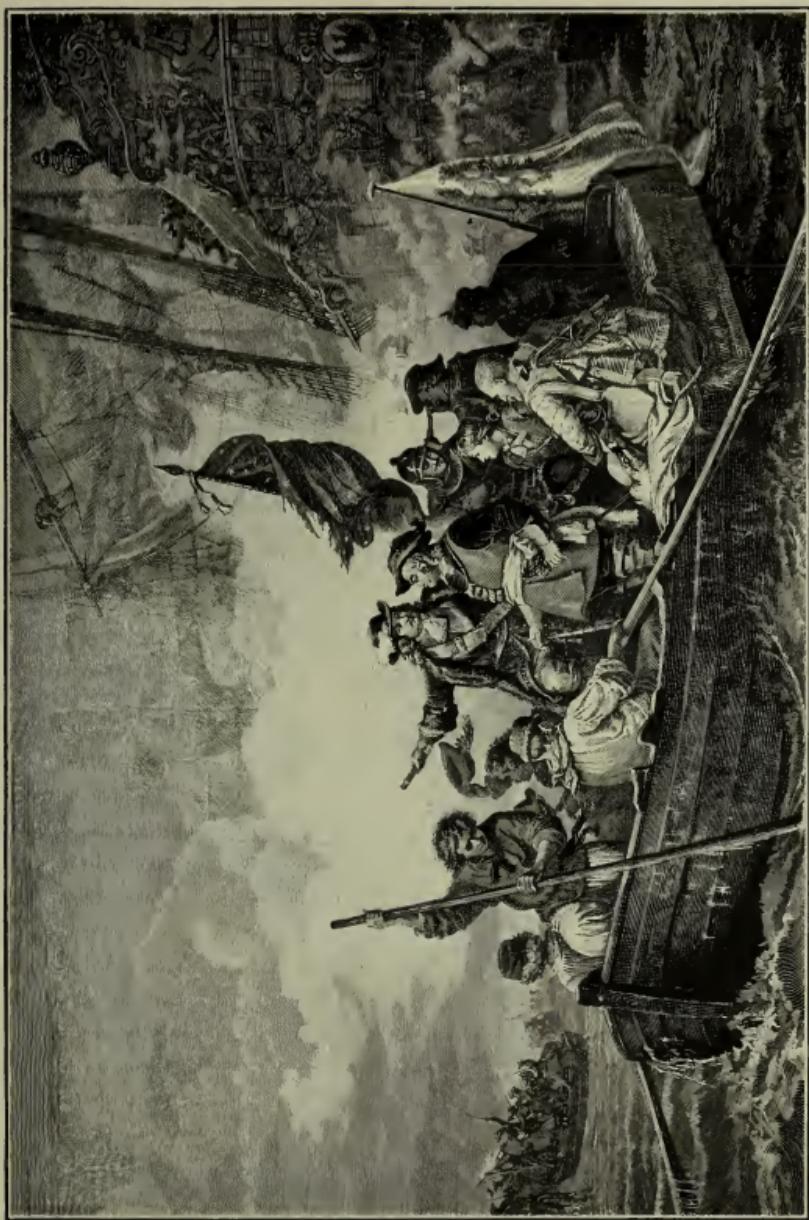
(The Great Elector Frederick Captures the Isle of Rugen)

From an eighteenth century print, re-engraved by R. Brendamour

THE victories of the Swedes in the Thirty Years War had given them a large slice of German territory along the seacoast in the north. Frederick's victory at Fehrbellin and the able campaign which followed it, drove the Swedes out of all their conquered province on the mainland and left them only the islands lying in the Baltic. Here they thought they were safe, for Brandenburg—the Prussia that was to be—had no navy whatever. But the strength and persistence of Frederick were not to be denied. He built ships and led his people to the attack of the large island of Rugen, which lay nearest to his coast. Here as at Fehrbellin the surprise of the unexpected assault was so great that the Swedes made little resistance; and Rugen was captured.

All Europe was now aroused to fear of Frederick. His own Emperor, the Hapsburg ruler whom he had saved from Louis XIV, joined with France and Sweden in a league against little Brandenburg. Facing such forces Frederick made peace and restored to Sweden most of the region he had snatched from her; but from this time onward his province was recognized as the leader and champion of the north German states.







THE FRENCH REFUGEES PEOPLE BRANDENBURG

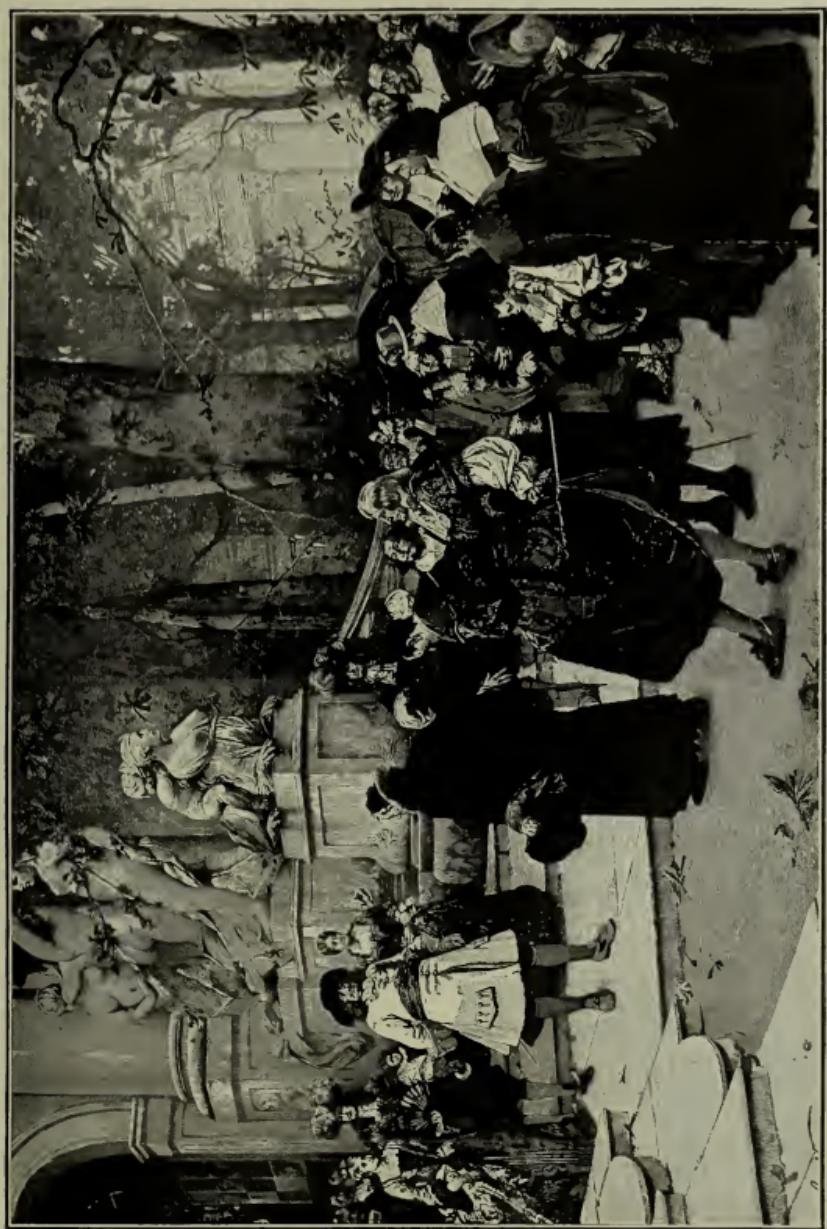
(The Great Elector Welcomes All the Protestants Expelled from France)

From a painting made in 1885 by the German artist, Hugo Vogel

THE victories of Frederick, the Great Elector, made him the foremost man not only of north Germany but of all the Protestant world. He became what Elizabeth of England, then Gustavus Adolphus and then Cromwell, had been, the chief champion of Protestantism in his day. Its chief opponent was King Louis XIV of France. In 1681 Louis decreed that Protestantism should be absolutely abolished in all his domains, that every Frenchman must become Catholic again. In France as elsewhere the Protestant faith had been earnestly adopted by a very large number of people, especially of the middle classes, the mechanics and traders, the earnest-thinking, hard-working folk. These were now in a tragic dilemma; for while Louis declared all France must be Catholic, he at the same time forbade any one to leave France, and none of the princes whose territory adjoined France dared offend its mighty monarch by harboring any refugees who fled from him.

None of them dared, that is, except the Great Elector. He openly proclaimed that all Protestants were welcome in Brandenburg. Thither therefore turned all the French who were ardent enough of faith and strong enough of character to defy King Louis. Frederick received them with kindness and assigned them lands to dwell on. Thus at one stroke Brandenburg gained and France lost a great mass of citizens of the most valuable type, faithful, serious, hard-working and high-minded.







GERMAN PEASANT LOYALTY

(The Bavarians Rise to Rescue Their Boy Princes from Captivity)

By Franz von Defregger, the noted Austrian painter of peasant life

WHILE the Great Elector was thus defending northern Germany against each aggression of Louis XIV, that mighty monarch found south Germany less resolutely protected. He seized one piece of territory after another, the chief item of his plunder being the great city of Strasburg. Finally, after the Great Elector's death, almost all Germany did manage to unite against Louis under the Hapsburg emperor Leopold I. Only the powerful south German state of Bavaria remained allied with France. Hence Hapsburg troops from Austria attacked Bavaria and captured Munich, its capital.

The Bavarian peasantry were devoted to their rulers. A rumor spread that the two young Bavarian princes were to be carried away as prisoners to Austria. At once the peasants rose under the lead of a giant smith, Balthes, and stormed the gates of Munich. They then tried to batter an entrance into the fortress where the princes were held.

The assault was unsuccessful, and the sovereign, or Elector, of Bavaria made a private treaty with the Austrians, saving his own head and leaving the poor peasants to suffer all the vengeance of the Austrians. This struggle broke the power with which Louis XIV had seemed about to conquer Germany. It also broke the power of Bavaria, and Austria became the chief south German state.







PRUSSIA'S FIRST KING

(*Frederick I. Admiring Schluter's Statue of the Great Elector*)

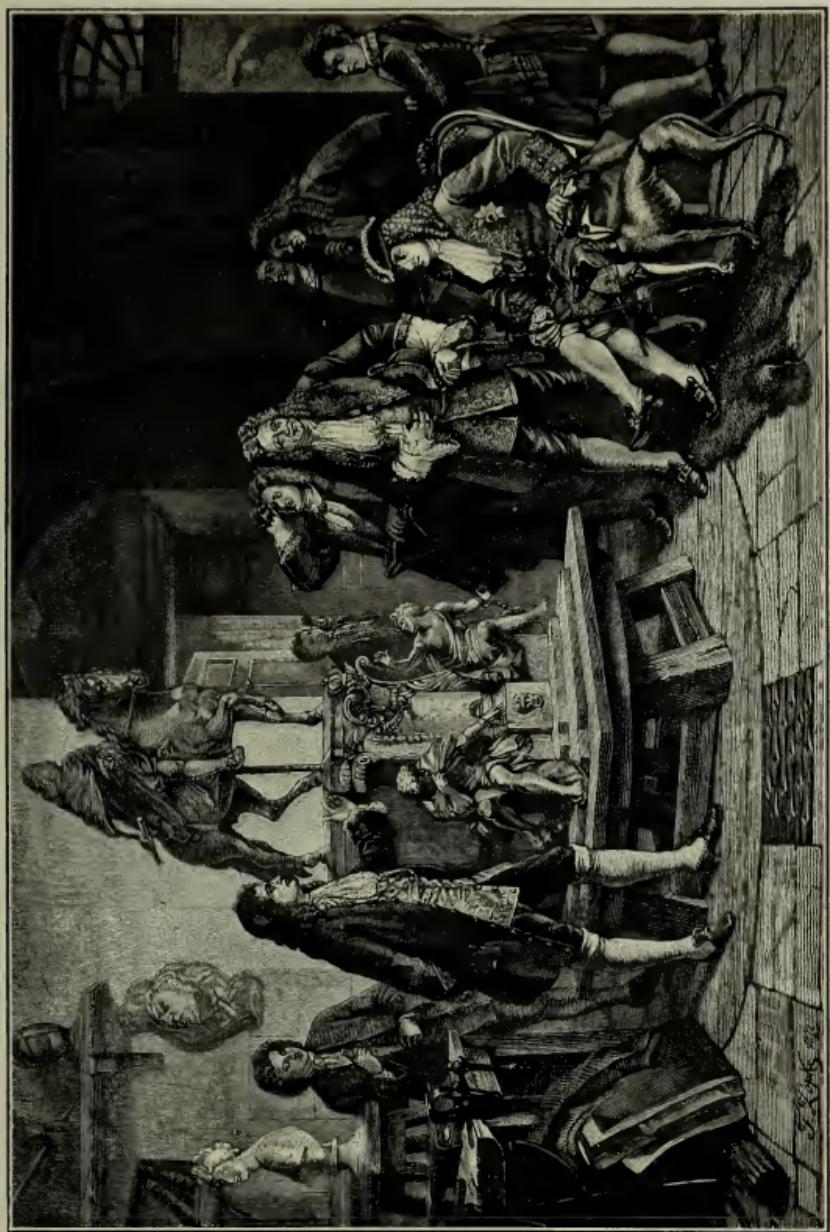
Painted in 1872 by the German artist, F. Zopke

THE same war which crushed Bavaria and made Austria so powerful in southern Germany, raised Brandenburg to still greater prominence in the north. The son of the Great Elector demanded as his reward for aiding the Emperor that his title should be raised to that of King. The Dukes of Austria were Kings of Bohemia and Hungary; and the Brandenburger also held rule of an independent state, Prussia, which was not included in the German empire. So he wanted to be known as King of Prussia. The Emperor granted him the title in 1701.

This first Prussian king was, as his grandson King Frederick the Great said of him, "great in small things but small in great ones." Unlike his resolute father, he was an admirer of Louis XIV and of all the French culture and refinement which Louis represented. Frederick I did little of real value for his people; on the contrary he taxed them heavily for his own ostentatious extravagance. He made his court glittering and gorgeous; he made it also a center of art, such rude art as he understood. The French connoisseurs whom he patronized laughed at him behind his back. Yet he, too, advanced Brandenburg, or Prussia as it was now called, by giving it education. He founded a university at Halle, and an Academy of Science at Berlin.

Our picture shows him posing as an art critic before a model of the noble statue of his father, which he caused to be erected in his capital.





IV-33

S. G. 1865



THE TOBACCO PARLIAMENT

(King Frederick William I. Inspires the Coarse Jokes of His Councillors)

By the noted Prussian historical artist, Adolf von Menzel (1815-1905)

King FREDERICK I of Prussia had followed French fashions and French culture. When his son, King Frederick William I, came to the throne, he so utterly hated all the pose and pretense of his father's court, that he deliberately made his own surroundings as rude and boorish as he could. For his father's ostentatious extravagance Frederick William substituted a strict economy. His wife had no court whatever and was served by only a single waiting woman. The king and his councillors met in a poor hall, seated round a common table, drinking beer like a party of artisans, and smoking huge pipes of tobacco. Their gathering was known throughout Europe as the "Tobacco Parliament." They enlivened their sessions by coarse pranks, such as making gorgeous foreign ambassadors sick with their tobacco smoke, or intoxicated with their liquor. King Frederick William had a pair of tame bear cubs, and his favorite jest was to have one of these tossed suddenly on the back of an unsuspecting councillor.

Yet the members of this gross "tobacco parliament" were shrewd, hard-headed advisers. They kept Prussia at peace while preparing always for war, building up their army and increasing their resources. The thriving peasantry and prosperous city folk became devoted to their homely old king and to all his family. In Prussia alone of all Europe there grew up a state wherein the king was really the "father of his people."







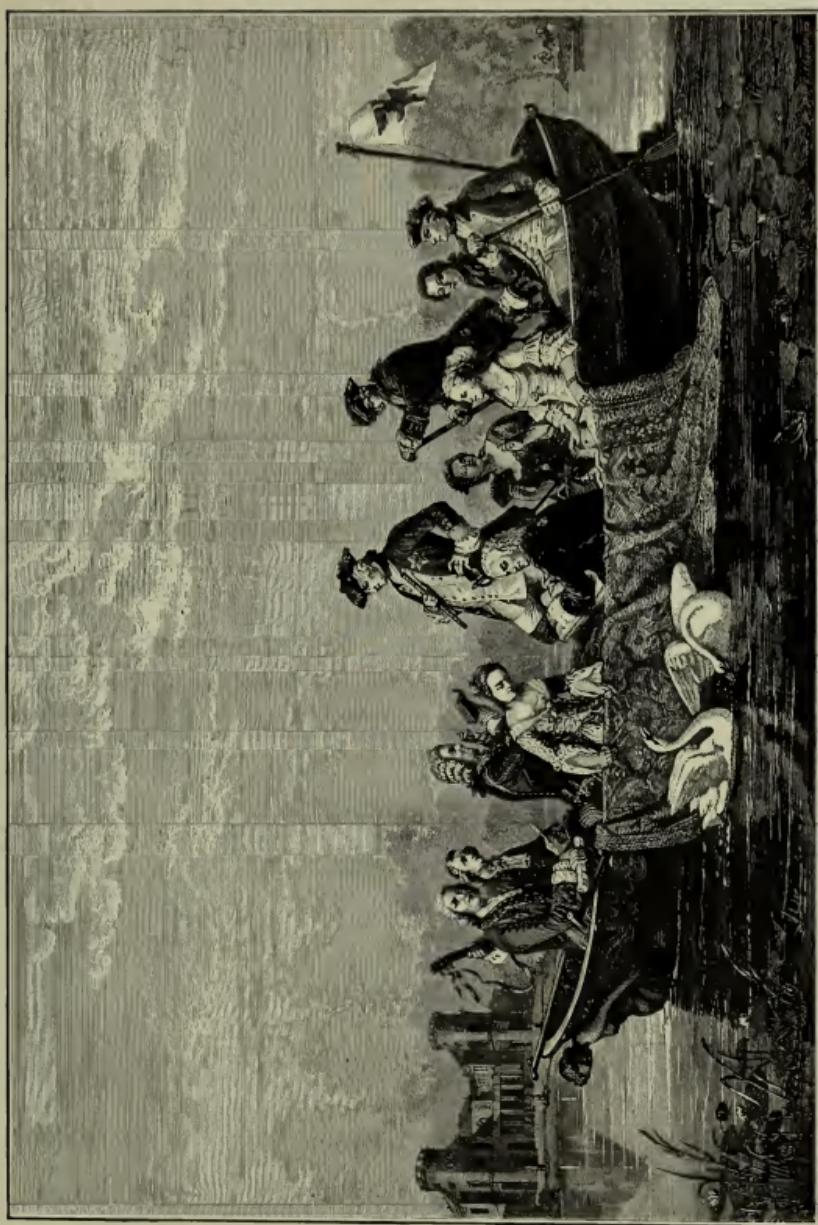
THE YOUTH OF FREDERICK THE GREAT (He Cultivates Music and Pleasure in His Castle of Rheinsberg)

From an old manuscript of the eighteenth century

FTER a peaceful reign of twenty-seven years Frederick William I was succeeded by his son King Frederick II, known as Frederick the Great. The story of Frederick's youth is a very painful one; for here again there was a marked and disastrous conflict of ideas between father and son. The young prince was deeply disgusted with his father's coarse life and coarser comrades, and expressed his views with a biting and sarcastic tongue. The old king's answer was to beat his son savagely. Twice at least he almost killed the young man. The despairing Frederick attempted to flee from the country, but was captured, court-martialed as a deserter and kept in solitary confinement for months.

Finally father and son agreed to live apart, and Frederick was given the castle of Rheinsberg, where he lived surrounded by French friends, engaged in literary and artistic pursuits, or in idle pleasure. He especially devoted himself to playing upon the flute, an instrument to which he clung through life and on which he became a very capable performer. His friends indeed proclaimed him a musical genius, but the pieces he composed give no evidence of unusual artistic power. Frederick also wrote essays and poems. Thus his age regarded him as being almost wholly a Frenchman, a poet and a philosopher; and his Prussian subjects looked forward to his rule as promising them a period of prosperity equal to that under his father, coupled with much more freedom and culture and joy of life.







FREDERICK AND THE PAGE

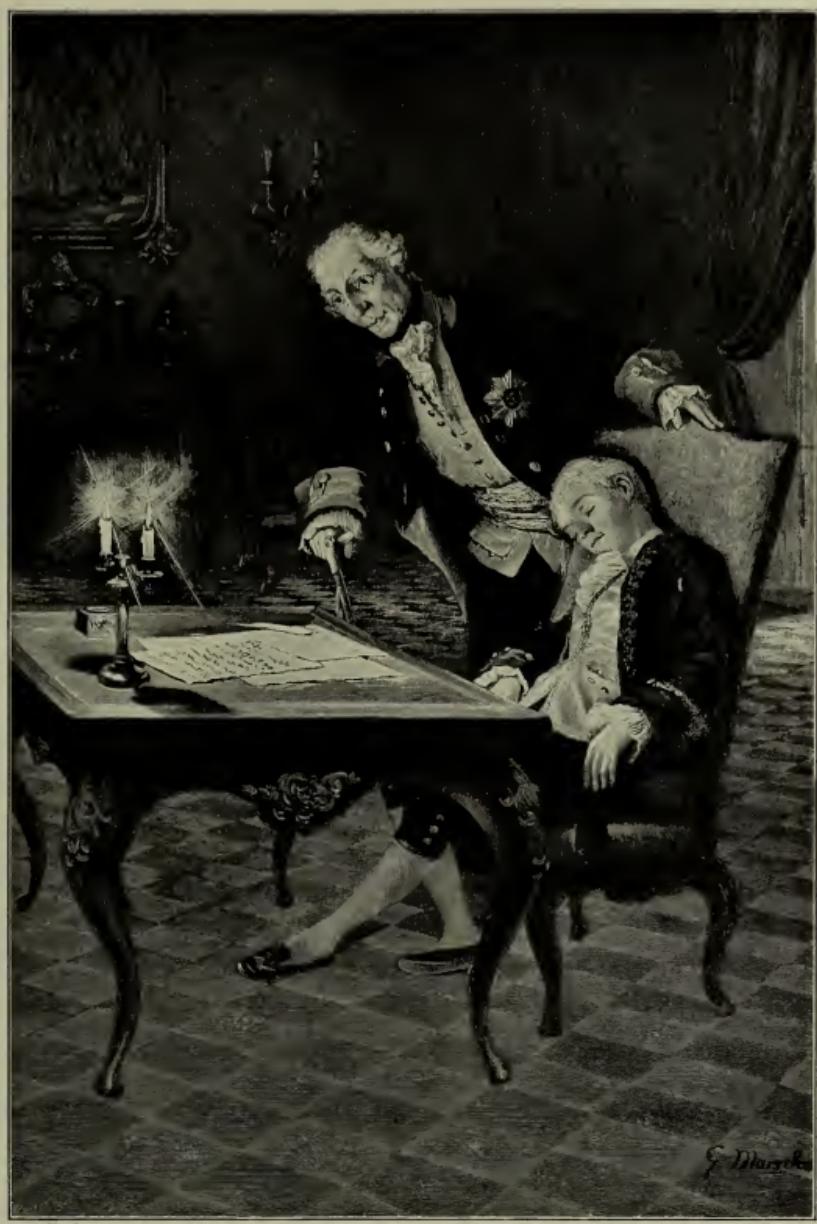
(The King Reads and Pardons the Boyish Letter of Complaint)

From a painting by G. Marschall, a contemporary German artist

NEVER was change more astonishing than that of Frederick the crown prince, the literary idler watchful only to avoid his father's terrible anger, into Frederick the king. He had imbibed from his French friends a complete scorn of all ideas of honor in political dealings. He was secretly determined to make Prussia a mighty country, to employ the wonderful army his father had built up, and to snatch whatever lands he could from other rulers. Austria happened at the time to be in the hands of a young queen, Maria Theresa; so Frederick calmly seized some of her provinces and kept them by hard fighting.

Yet to his own people Frederick was always a kindly, wise, well-meaning father, so that they continued always to love him and be devoted to him. A typical incident of his reign is that depicted here. One of the lads whose duty was to wait in his antechamber all night in case he needed them, fell asleep at his post. This was regarded as a terrible offense. Frederick, discovering the offender, came quietly behind him and found he had been writing a letter home, grumbling boy-fashion over his hard work, growling irreverently at the king, and adding that he meant soon to ask for a vacation to visit them all at home. Frederick merely wrote an added line to the unfinished letter saying that the leave of absence had been granted by the king, who trusted that when the lad returned to duty he would have learned to perform it more resolutely and cheerfully.





self in battle, and at Lutzen he galloped across in the front of his army from one wing to another. A shot struck him—a traitor shot, say some from his own German allies. He fell from his horse, and a band of the opposing cavalry encircled and slew him, not knowing who he was. His Swedes, who adored him, pressed furiously forward to save or avenge their leader. The Wallensteiners, after a desperate struggle, broke and fled before the irresistible attack.

Wallenstein himself, his hat and cloak riddled with bullets, rushed in vain among his men, taunting them furiously with their cowardice. It was only the night and the death of Gustavus that prevented the Swedes from reaping the full fruits of their victory. The imperial troops retreated unpursued. Wallenstein held a savage court-martial, and executed all of his men whom he could prove had been among the first in flight.

From this time the war enters on its fifth stage. Wallenstein did little more fighting. He withdrew his troops into Bohemia, and it is hard to say what purposes simmered in his dark and inscrutable brain. He certainly was no longer loyal to the Emperor; probably the Emperor plotted against him. Wallenstein seems to have contemplated making himself king of an independent Bohemian kingdom. At any rate, he broke openly with his sovereign, and at a great banquet persuaded his leading officers to sign an oath that they would stand by him in whatever he did. Some of the more timid among them warned the Emperor, and with his approval formed a trap for Wallenstein. The general's chief lieutenants were suddenly set upon and slain; then the murderers rushed to Wallenstein's own apartments. Hearing them coming, he stood up dauntlessly, threw wide his arms to their blows, and died as silent and mysterious as he had lived. His slayers were richly rewarded by Ferdinand.

All Germany was weary of the war. The contending parties had fought each other to a standstill; and, had Germany alone been concerned, peace would certainly have followed. But the Swedes, abandoning Gustavus' higher policy, continued the war for what increase of territory they could get; and France helped herself to what German cities she could in Alsace and Lorraine. So the war went on, the German princes taking sides now with this one, now the other, and nobody apparently ever thinking of the poor peasantry.

The spirit of the brutal soldiery grew even more atrocious. Their captives were tortured to death for punishment, or for ransom, or, it is to be feared, for the mere amusement of the bestial captors. The open country became everywhere a wilderness. The soldiers themselves began starving in the dismal desert.

The Emperor, Ferdinand II., the cause of all this destruction, died in 1637, and was succeeded by his son, Ferdinand III. (1637-1657). The war still continued, though in a feeble, listless way, with no decisive victories on either

side, until the Peace of Westphalia, in 1648. This peace placed Protestants and Catholics on an equal footing of toleration throughout the empire. It gave Sweden what territory she wanted in the north, and France what she asked toward the Rhine. Switzerland and Holland were acknowledged as independent lands. The importance of the smaller princes was increased, they, too, becoming practically independent, and the power of the emperors was all but destroyed. From this time the importance of the Hapsburgs rested solely on their personal possessions in Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia. The title of Emperor remained little better than a name.

Indeed, Germany itself had become scarcely more than a name. During those terrible thirty years the population of the land is said to have dwindled from fifteen millions to less than five millions. In the Palatinate less than fifty thousand people remained where there had been five hundred thousand. Whole districts everywhere lay utterly waste, wild, and uninhabited. Men killed themselves to escape starvation, or slew their brothers for a fragment of bread. A full description of the horrors of that awful time will never be written; much has been mercifully obliterated. The material progress of Germany, its students say, was retarded by two centuries' growth. To this day the land has not fully recovered from the exhaustion of that awful war.



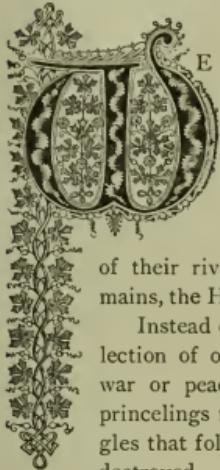
GUSTAVUS BEFORE NUERMBERG



FREDERICK I. OF PRUSSIA GOING TO HIS CORONATION

Chapter LXII

THE RISE OF THE HOHENZOLLERNS AND THE GREAT ELECTOR



E can no longer trace our German story by the simple method of following the lives of the emperors. Their shadowy authority became of small account in the new Germany which rose from the ashes of the Thirty Years' War. The emperors continued as Austrian princes, mighty in Austria, but possessing no more influence in the remainder of Germany than did many of their rivals. From the entire empire outside their personal domains, the Hapsburgs drew an annual income of less than \$5,000.

Instead of one solid united kingdom, Germany had become a collection of over two hundred independent little states, each making war or peace as it pleased. Never, by any chance, did all of the princelings fight on the same side in any of the great European struggles that followed. What power they possessed, was thus divided and destroyed. They neutralized one another, and Germany became what Italy had been, the battleground whereon stronger nations fought out their quarrels.

It was thus a new and widely different Germany that slowly rose upon the ancient ruins. Not only had all the accumulated wealth of the country disappeared in the Thirty Years' War, but historians tell us that the very character of the race had changed, not for the better. The proud self-reliance, the resolute independence of former days, had given place to weak fear and fawning submission.

France was now the dominant country of Europe, and French influence, French manners, courtesies, vices, and follies spread an artificial veneer over the upper classes of German society. Most of the little princes squandered their incomes in the vain effort to build palaces and gardens that should rival the gorgeous edifices which the French King, Louis XIV., was erecting at Versailles.

One German ruler stands out as a notable and honorable exception among the foolish spendthrifts. This is Frederick William, Elector of Brandenburg, commonly called the Great Elector.

Frederick William was the real founder of modern Germany. His little electorate of Brandenburg rose slowly to power in northern Germany, and became the kingdom of Prussia, which in our own day has taken the rank once held by Austria, and has created under Prussian leadership a new and more united German empire.

The present imperial family of Germany, the Hohenzollerns, are direct descendants of the Great Elector. It is therefore worth our while to turn backward through history for a moment and trace the rise of this renowned race. The Hohenzollerns date away back to Charlemagne's time, and came originally from the same district as the two other great German families, the Hohenstaufens and the Hapsburgs. They lived among the northern hill-slopes of the Alps, the ancient Swabian land. There, in what is now Wurtemberg, still stands the steep hill and stern old castle of Hohenzollern, a name which antiquarians tell us might mean in English "High toll place." Perhaps the lords of the tower were prominent among their fellows, for the tolls they exacted from the weary merchants, whom the Italian trade sent plodding over the Alpine passes.

It was in the time of Frederick Barbarossa that a younger son of the Hohenzollerns, Conrad by name, left the castle, to seek his fortune at the mighty Emperor's court. Only the vaguest outline of Conrad's old romance has come down to us. He married a forlorn heiress, won back the family possessions of which she had been deprived, and was made by Barbarossa Burgrave (*burg-graf*, which means city-count, or governor of the city for the Emperor) of Nuremberg.

Nuremberg is, like Hohenzollern, in southern Germany; and for centuries the descendants of Conrad remained there as chiefs of the city, counts of the empire. One of them, Frederick IV., as you will remember, helped the Hapsburgs to the imperial throne. Another, Frederick, sixth of the name, transferred his family fortunes to northern Germany at the time of the Council of Constance. The Emperor Sigismund was deep in debt, and the Hohenzollerns had grown rich. Frederick lent his Emperor large sums, being given as security

Sigismund's Electorate of Brandenburg. The debts accumulated, and at last Brandenburg, land, people, electoral dignity, and all were sold outright to the Hohenzollerns.

Brandenburg was the most northeasterly of the German principalities, lying on both banks of the Elbe, with its capital at Berlin. Originally it had been a frontier land, wrested by the Saxons from the Wends, away back in the days of Henry the City-Builder. Its name came from the old Wendish city and fortress of Brannebor.

Frederick entered on his new authority in 1415. He was already well and favorably known in Brandenburg; and the citizens of Berlin readily took the oath of fealty to his race, which they have so well kept. Frederick's rule was wise and strong. He crushed the robber knights by using cannon against their fortresses. He led a crusading army against the Hussites. Altogether, an important man in his day was this new Elector, Frederick I. of Brandenburg.

In the year 1618, a most important accession expanded the power of the Hohenzollern Electorate. This was the German colony of Prussia. You will remember that Prussia had been won from the heathen after much hard fighting by the Teutonic Order. At the time of the Reformation the Grand Master of the Order happened to be a younger son of the Hohenzollerns. He became Protestant, abolished his Order, and made himself Duke of Prussia, holding the land as a fief of the Polish kingdom. The Duchy of Prussia finally passed by inheritance to the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns in 1618. It still remained, however, a part of the Polish kingdom, a little German island surrounded by Poles, and far to the east of the other German lands.

The Hohenzollern Elector, who held these varied possessions during most of the Thirty Years' War, was a staunch Protestant, but a poor statesman. He tried to keep at peace with both sides and to maintain a strict neutrality, with the result that Brandenburg was repeatedly desolated by both parties. At last its unhappy ruler fled from the misery he could not prevent, to his more distant province of Prussia, and died there, it is said, of a broken heart.

His son was the Great Elector, a man made of sterner stuff. Frederick William, though only twenty when he came to the throne (1640), at once erected his little state into a bulwark of northern Protestantism. He formed a standing army, the beginning of the splendid Prussian armies of later date. There was not much fighting left to do, but Frederick made himself feared, trusted, and respected, and at the peace of 1648 secured for Brandenburg far better terms than his father would have received.

A war between Sweden and Poland soon after, gave young Frederick the opportunity to establish his reputation as an able general and statesman. By mingled diplomacy and arms he freed his Duchy of Prussia from Poland. He

thus became, in the Prussian portion of his domains, an independent sovereign, subject not even to the empire.

Frederick next set to work to improve the condition of his people. So shrewd and far-sighted were his efforts for their prosperity, so effective his reforms, that gradually immigrants from the neighboring states began flocking into Brandenburg, and its wealth recuperated far more rapidly than that of other districts. A feeling of trust and of real devotion to their rulers slowly grew up in the hearts of the Brandenburgers, very different from the resentful sentiment sometimes existing in other states of Germany.

The story of the next fifty years is only a wearisome tale of continuous French aggressions. Few kings have ever so frankly and insolently robbed their neighbors as did Louis XIV. By repeated seizures of German territory, he extended his frontier to the Rhine, and in some places even clutched cities upon its further bank. The slow and feeble Hapsburg Emperor, Leopold I. (1657-1705), was no match for him.

The one man who stood up dauntlessly before Louis, and again and again foiled his schemes, was the Great Elector. Louis would even have been made Emperor by his paid German satellites, but for Frederick William's unflinching opposition. So again the Hapsburgs owed their crown to the Hohenzollerns. Frederick's service was repaid with ingratitude. A war had been declared against France, and Frederick marched with his troops to the Rhineland. But the Emperor had arranged a secret treaty with Louis; and the Brandenburgers were purposely ordered from place to place, kept marching and countermarching, and never allowed to attack the French.

Then Sweden also joined Louis's alliance, and, without warning, invaded undefended Brandenburg. It seemed as if the Great Elector was at last caught in Louis's toils and must inevitably be crushed. Now, however, was demonstrated the strength of Frederick's hold upon his subjects. The entire peasantry of Brandenburg rose in their ruler's name and struggled manfully to hold back the Swedes. On their banners was written, "We are only peasants, but we can die for our lord."

The resistance gave Frederick William the time he needed. He left the Rhine country in haste, and by forced marches brought his ardent soldiers back to the "fatherland." He broke right in between two divisions of the Swedish army at Fehrbellin (1675). Only his cavalry were with him, but by brilliant manœuvres he held the Swedes in check, waiting until his infantry could arrive. The rash enthusiasm of some of his troops, however, opened the struggle unexpectedly, and Frederick would not desert them. He was outnumbered more than two to one; his men and horses were exhausted by their long and hurried journey; the Swedes were reputed the best soldiers in Europe.

Seldom has fight been so desperately contested. Frederick himself led his gallant horsemen in charge after charge. He was wounded, his horse shot, more than once his devoted men had to save him—"hew him out" is the German expression—from the midst of the enemy. Half his officers, exposing themselves as recklessly as he, were slain. But he won the battle. The Swedes fled upon every side, and all Europe with one accord united in hailing the victor as the "Great Elector."

He followed up his victory by seizing Pomerania, the coast land of the Baltic, German territory which had been given Sweden by the Peace of Westphalia. Now it was in German hands again. The Elector captured Stralsund, before which Wallenstein had failed. Building himself a navy, he ventured even upon the sea, where hitherto the Swedes had been undisputed masters, and took possession of the Island of Rugen.

The Swedes formed an alliance with Poland; and an army invaded Prussia from the east, but fled before Frederick could attack it. He pursued his foes on sledges, steadily northward over the winter snows. Four hundred miles he followed them along the Baltic coast, came up with them at Riga, and wiped the army out of existence.

Again the treacherous Emperor Leopold deserted Frederick. He had no wish, he said, to see a new Vandal kingdom established in the north. In 1679 at Nymwegen a secret treaty of peace was arranged among all the contending parties except Brandenburg. By this treaty the Elector was to be compelled to return his conquests to Sweden, or all the sovereigns would unite against him. Frederick hesitated, almost ready to do as his grandson Frederick the Great did later—fight them all. At last he surrendered Pomerania.

The very fact that such a coalition was formed against him, proves the height to which Brandenburg had risen. Forty thousand well-trained soldiers moved at the Elector's command. Yet even these did not constitute his main strength. That lay in the hold he had established over the hearts of his countrymen.

Some three years later Louis XIV., standing at the height of his power, withdrew the important "Edict of Nantes," abolishing Protestantism in France, yet forbidding the Protestants to emigrate. The persecuted sect fled secretly by thousands. The Great Elector came openly forward and offered them a refuge in his domains. Louis was furious, but the Elector stood firm. Probably twenty thousand of the refugees established themselves in Brandenburg. They greatly increased the land's wealth and prosperity, not only by bringing it clever brains and dextrous hands, but by adding to the strong and earnest Christian element, who would cling, in spite of suffering and persecution, to their faith.

The Great Elector died in 1688, after a successful reign of forty-eight years. He had made Brandenburg the leading state of northern Germany, the rival of Austria and the champion of European Protestantism. In the closing year of his life, he succeeded in uniting almost all the German states in a strong league against Louis XIV., and was himself about to lead a great imperial army against France, when death closed his high and honorable career.

During all this period southern Germany had languished under the Emperor Leopold's guidance. He, or rather his generals, had to fight three hard wars against the Turks. In 1683 the Turkish Grand Vizier besieged Vienna with an army of over two hundred thousand men. Leopold and his court fled, leaving the city to its fate. The citizens, however, defended themselves desperately. When starvation approached, they lived on cats and dogs and mice. The Turks, weary of the long siege, made a tremendous assault. It was repulsed, but the exhausted city seemed on the verge of falling. Suddenly a Polish and German army of relief appeared under the famous Polish King, John Sobieski. The Turks, confident in their enormous number, sent only a portion of their force to meet Sobieski. But such was the valor of the Polish King, and such the energy of his troops, that they drove the whole confused horde of the Turks into headlong flight.

So vast was the plunder gained on the battlefield that Sobieski was at a loss to know what to do with it, and wrote home to the Polish Queen: "An incalculable booty has fallen into our hands. The camels, mules, and captive Turks are driven by me in herds. I myself have fallen heir to the treasures of the Grand Vizier. . . . I cannot describe all his luxurious baths, fountains, gardens, wild animals. Some of the quivers alone are worth thousands of dollars."

In the Turkish camp were found letters showing that Louis XIV. had urged the Mahometans to war against the Emperor; and there were French plans directing them how to carry on the siege. It is said that coffee first became a common drink in Vienna at this time, and spread thence through the rest of Europe, so enormous was the supply of coffee beans left behind by the Turks.

Leopold was ungrateful to Sobieski, as he had been to the Great Elector. "How should an Emperor meet a King of Poland?" he asked his counsellors. "With open arms," answered the generous Duke of Lorraine, who had led the German army to the rescue. Leopold, however, met Sobieski with a cold Latin oration of thanks, nor would he allow the Polish wounded within the city. The Poles were so disgusted that they besought their chief to abandon the war; but he continued fighting the Turks until he had completely driven them from Hungary.

Luckily for Leopold, he finally chanced upon a great general for himself.

Prince Eugene of Savoy, a fiery, dashing, little hero, who had been educated in France for a churchman. Louis XIV. laughed at the dapper little abbé when he insisted on being a soldier. Eugene fled from France, entered the Austrian service, and rose by his valor and ability to be commanding general. He defeated the Turks repeatedly, finally crushing them in a tremendous battle at Zenta, 1697. The Turks were never afterward dangerous to Europe.

Meanwhile, the German wars with Louis XIV. had continued. In 1688, after the death of the Great Elector, the French troops under General Turenne entered the Rhenish Palatinate. Knowing they could not retain it, they proceeded systematically to make it a desert. The inhabitants were themselves compelled to destroy their houses, plough down their growing crops, and leave the country. Many of them perished in the cold. General Melac sacked Heidelberg and blew up its beautiful castle. The graves, wherein some of the German emperors had been laid at Spires, were broken open; and the French soldiers played at ten-pins with the ancient bones and skulls. This wanton savagery of the French has not even yet been either forgotten or forgiven by the Germans.

All Europe except Bavaria was at length drawn into an alliance against France and the Bavarian duchy. The struggle that followed is called the war of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), because it arose from Louis's effort to have his grandson succeed to the throne of Spain, where the Hapsburg descendants of Charles V. had died out. Of course the Austrian Hapsburgs claimed the succession for themselves.

This war was the turning-point of Louis's fortunes. Prince Eugene came back from defeating the Turks, to fight the mighty master who had laughed at him. England sent her famous general, Marlborough, to help him, and the two beat the French in one great battle after another: Blenheim, Oudenarde, Malplaquet. The names are as glorious in English history as in German.

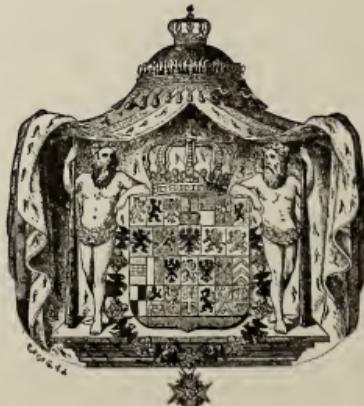
Blenheim, the first of these tremendous victories, completely broke the strength of poor Bavaria. The land was seized by Austrian troops, against whom the Bavarian peasants rose in loyal support of their rulers. A rumor arising that the young Bavarian princes were to be carried as prisoners from Munich, the peasants stormed the city, under the leadership of the giant smith Balthes, who himself smashed in the city gate, crying, "Save the children!" The uprising was without result. The Bavarian nobles made peace with the Emperor by abandoning the peasantry, who were betrayed upon every side, and suffered all the punishment for their Elector's union with the French.

The struggles of the great nations gave lesser rulers a chance to rise. Within twenty years of one another, three electors of northern Germany became kings, as did also one lesser German prince. The first to mount to this new

dignity was Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony, who in 1697, after Sobieski's death, was chosen as King of Poland. Augustus was said to be the handsomest, strongest, and most dashing man in Europe; but he was profligate and vain. To win the Polish crown he changed his religion and became a Catholic. This lessened the number of Protestant electors, and resulted in the general acceptance of a new elector, whom the Emperor had created and added to their number, the Protestant Duke of Hanover. A few years later (1714) an elector of Hanover became King of England as George I. Sweden also received a German king in 1718, its throne passing by marriage to the Prince of Hesse-Cassel.

For our present story, however, the most important kingship was that conferred on the Elector of Brandenburg, Frederick III., son of the Great Elector. Frederick, jealous of the rise of the Saxon Augustus, strong in the power bequeathed him by his father, demanded as the price of his help in the War of the Spanish Succession that he, too, should be allowed to assume the title of king. Brandenburg was, of course, the property of the empire, but Prussia was his as an independent ruler. So on January 18, 1701, he was, by unanimous consent of the allied sovereigns, crowned King of Prussia at Koenigsberg, the capital of the Prussian duchy.

Most of his contemporaries laughed quietly over the vanity of the man who took such elaborate trouble to change one empty title for another. But the wise general, Prince Eugene, foreseeing what an added unity and influence this would give to the growing power and scattered dominions of the Hohenzollerns, said: "The Emperor ought to have hanged every minister who counselled him to make this dangerous concession to the Brandenburgers."



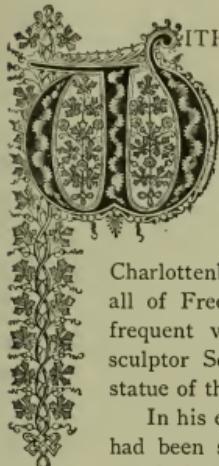
COAT OF ARMS OF THE FIRST KING OF PRUSSIA



FREDERICK THE GREAT PLANNING SANS-SOUCI

Chapter LXIII

THE KINGDOM OF PRUSSIA AND FREDERICK THE GREAT



WITH the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Electorate of Brandenburg and the Prussian duchy entered upon their new career as the Kingdom of Prussia. The new king, known as Frederick I. of Prussia, was, as you have seen, a vain man. He copied the extravagances and luxuries of the French court. Berlin, his capital, was enlarged and beautified until it became almost a new city. The royal palace, the splendid edifices at Charlottenburg, and the famous street "Under the Lindens," are all of Frederick I.'s creation. He was also a patron of art, and a frequent visitor at the studios of artists, especially that of the sculptor Schluter, who modelled for him the well-known Berlin statue of the Great Elector.

In his enthusiasm Frederick forgot the mercantile caution which had been so characteristic of the Hohenzollerns. He taxed his people heavily, injured the prosperity of the state, and did much to weaken the loyalty of the lower classes toward his house.

He was succeeded in 1713 by his son, Frederick William I. (1713-1740). This king determined to copy the German prudence and wisdom of his grandfather rather than the French follies of his father. The country prospered greatly under his rule. He governed it strictly as a mercantile establishment, thriftily, cautiously, laboriously, with no expenditure or display. His wife was allowed but a single waiting-woman, while in the Austrian court there were over a hundred. The King himself was the centre of every department, work-

ing hard and honestly, and exacting similar efforts from each subordinate. In the course of his twenty-seven years of rule, he almost trebled the resources of his country.

Unfortunately, he carried his scorn of French manners so far in other directions that he is not always a pleasant figure to contemplate. He declined having any manners at all, even those of common politeness, about his court. He and his counsellors met in a bare hall, more like a tavern than a place for dignified consultation; and there they drank beer and smoked, and played coarse, practical jokes upon one another. The King had a couple of little bear cubs whom it was his special sport to set unexpectedly on the back of the learned writer Gundling, who was made the butt of the other counsellors.

This remarkable assemblage was known all over Europe as "the tobacco parliament." Foreign ambassadors were compelled to state their business before it, and one of the King's chief delights was to get his distinguished guests drunk, or to sicken them with the tobacco smoke.

In his daily life also, Frederick William abandoned all courtesy and kindness. His counsellors, his children, and even his wife were beaten with his heavy cane, whenever they angered him. As he wandered through the streets of Berlin, any man he found idle was apt to receive a similar caning. Once while out riding he met a poor Jew, who tried to slink away as the savage old King approached. "What are you sneaking off for," thundered Frederick. "How dare you fear me!" and he began belaboring the unfortunate with his whip, crying all the while "Stop fearing me, you rascal! Love me! Love me!"

He had an almost insane passion for recruiting his army with very tall men. His agents scoured Europe in quest of these giants, and kidnapped them wherever found. Cruel outrages naturally resulted, and Prussia even came near being involved in serious war. Frederick's "*langen kerle*" (long fellows) were his one extravagance, and upon them he spent millions of dollars. Foreign monarchs, wishing to gain some favor from him, would send him presents of giants. He even tried to cultivate a race of his favorites for himself, by compelling his grenadiers to mate with the tallest women that could be found.

His *langen kerle* were never used in war, being altogether too expensive a luxury. Indeed, there was not much war in Frederick's time, and in the little there was, he was far too shrewd and economical to engage recklessly. His chief general was his cousin, Prince Leopold of Dessau, the "Old Dessauer" as he was called, a man after the King's own heart. Once in church, the pastor gave out a hymn in which occurred the words,

"Nor hunger, nor thirst,
Nor want, nor pain,
Nor wrath of the Grim Prince
Shall me restrain."

The "Old Dessauer," seated below, started up in a rage and rushed at the preacher with upraised stick. "It is Beelzebub I mean, Your Highness!" shrieked the terrified man. "Beelzebub, not Your Highness!" Convinced with difficulty that the defiance had not been meant for him personally, the prince sank back into his seat, still angrily shaking his head and growling over his offended dignity.

Both Frederick and he, however, were beloved by their people, who recognized the honesty and usefulness of their rugged rule. The Prince of Dessau created a remarkable army of the Prussian troops, taught them to use the bayonet, and to load and fire their guns with a rapidity and accuracy which made the army far more effective than any other in Europe.

The King employed his new troops to drive the Swedes from most of Pomerania, the coast land which the Great Elector had won and lost between Brandenburg and the Baltic sea. The people of Pomerania welcomed their annexation to the prosperous and well-governed kingdom, and Frederick William was thus able to add this important province permanently to his domains. He prepared for his son a Prussian kingdom, wealthy, powerful, and loyal to its rulers beyond any other state of the time.

That son, Frederick II., became the most renowned of all the Prussian sovereigns and generals. "Frederick the Great" history calls him, and great he certainly was in the stern courage with which he faced his fate. No man ever passed through a more tempestuous life, or experienced more tragic extremes of fortune. No man ever endured them more bravely.

Even his childhood was a struggle. Though reared in that coarse repulsive court of Frederick William, he was of finer mould than his father. He avoided taking part in the drinking orgies and practical jokes; he was, in his father's opinion, too much inclined toward French fripperies, learned to play the flute, dabbled a bit in scientific studies, talked atheism, and even wrote witty letters suspiciously French in style.

The grim old King was disgusted that he should have so effeminate a son. Young Frederick and his favorite sister, Wilhelmina, became their father's special aversion. He half starved them, she declares. He certainly made their lives unbearable by his taunts, vulgar torments, and furious beatings. Even when Frederick grew to be a young man the beatings continued. Twice at least the King came near taking his life, once striving to run him through with a sword, and at another time nearly strangling him with a curtain cord.

Frederick in his desperation at last determined to run away. He was caught, tried by court-martial as a deserter from the army, and condemned by his father to be shot. The savage old tyrant seems to have been in earnest, too, having a second son whom he much preferred as a successor for his throne.

It was only after earnest entreaty from all sides, even from the Emperor, that the parent relented and sullenly pardoned his son. The prince's chief comrade and admirer, a somewhat dissolute young Lieutenant Katte, who had helped him in his flight, was executed; and the prince was compelled to witness the death scene, his face, we are told, being held by force to the window of his prison cell.

Some sort of reconciliation was finally patched up between father and son; for Frederick spoke of his parent in after days with little love perhaps, but always with grave respect. The young prince devoted himself zealously to the work of the government, married the bride his father selected, and was given a palace and establishment of his own at Rheinsburg, where science was encouraged and men of learning made welcome. Frederick was even allowed to correspond at will with witty and irreligious Frenchmen, Voltaire among the number. The years from 1733 to 1740, which Frederick spent in this quiet retirement of Rheinsburg, he was wont to declare were the happiest of his life.

By his writings, and even more by his ready, biting tongue, he made for himself quite a name in the literary world. Men of learning looked eagerly to the time when this able philosopher, this clever wit, should ascend the Prussian throne. They counted on much theoretical improvement in the government, and something, perhaps, of practical benefit to themselves.

While this strangely contrasting father and son were thus preparing Prussia for larger destinies, let us glance for a moment at what was going on in the remainder of Germany. There was little that is pleasant to record. Saxony, which had once been more powerful than Prussia, was staggering to ruin under the vain and luxurious Augustus the Strong, who treated his German possessions as quite subordinate to his Polish kingdom. His successor, Augustus III., not only preyed upon Saxony himself, but surrendered it to the even more heartless plundering of wicked favorites.

Hanover, too, had suffered through the elevation of its ruler, the Elector George. After he ascended the English throne, Hanover became little more than an English province. The Elector's portrait was placed upon a chair, and all the forms of government were gone through, with polite address to the picture, as if the potentate himself sat there. It is very possible that the picture comported itself with more dignity and propriety than the real George would have done; but it could not say "No!" to any of the oppressions and cruelties suggested to it by greedy ministers.

The common people everywhere were ground beneath the feet of petty tyrants, to whom in most places they submitted with a weakness in strange contrast to the ancient German sturdiness. It was at this time that the practice

of selling troops for the use of other countries began in Germany. Frederick, Duke of Gotha, inaugurated the shameful traffic in 1733. Following his example, many of the petty princes forced their subjects into regiments, held them together under threat of death for desertion, and then sold them like cattle at so much per head, to be butchered in foreign lands, in wars which they did not understand.

What wonder that patriotism died out in German breasts! Emigration began, at first to Prussia, which despite its standing army of eighty thousand men, was a paradise in comparison with other states. In Prussia a man might at least live, and toil for himself, and believe as his heart taught him. Then came emigration to the far-away colonies in America, the first Germans to settle there in numbers coming from Wurtemberg in 1717.

England and France were in the van of civilization. Germany, with its rulers brutal and selfish, its cities wasted and impoverished, its peasants down-trodden and spiritless, seemed hopelessly in the rear. The shadowy Emperors, seated in state in their far-off Vienna court, did nothing to improve the disastrous condition of affairs. The sluggish Leopold was succeeded by an energetic son, Joseph I. (1705-1711), but Joseph died before he had done anything except to war successfully against France.

He gave place to his brother, Charles VI. (1711-1740), chiefly famous for the extravagance of his household. Half the population of Vienna ate regularly at Charles' expense. There were forty thousand official positions attached to the imperial court. The openness with which he was robbed astounds us. Every day the stewards charged twelve quarts of the finest wine for the Empress' night drink, and two barrels of Tokay wine for dipping the bread for her parrots.

Charles VI. was the last Hapsburg in the male line. Having no sons or brothers, he, during all his reign, principally exercised his diplomatic talents in inducing every one to promise that his daughter, Maria Theresa, should succeed him. She could not be empress in her own name; but she was to rule all the hereditary lands of the family, and her husband Francis, Duke of Lorraine, whom she wed in 1736, was to be Emperor. Every court of Germany, and most of the foreign ones, agreed with solemn oaths to this succession, and Charles seems to have died content in the belief that they would keep their word. The utter faithlessness which was the accepted "diplomacy" of the time, might have taught him better.

The year 1740 was an important one in Germany. Shrewd, parsimonious, old Frederick William of Prussia died in May. The foolish, extravagant Emperor Charles passed away in October. New blood came to the front; Frederick II. (1740-1786), the witty young philosopher, ruled in Prussia; Maria

Theresa, a fair and tender young wife and mother, in Austria. It seems strange that these two able rulers did not become friends, instead of astounding the world with their prodigious struggles. But the young philosopher proved wholly unlike what his friends had expected. He dreamed of military glory, was eager to build up the fame and power of Prussia, to advance still higher the rising star of the Hohenzollerns. Remember that as yet his little domain was not regarded by any means as on a level with Austria. Prussia was still one of the lesser German states, like Saxony and Bavaria and Hanover. Austria was queen over them all, one of the three great European kingdoms.

Frederick was the first to break the general promise that Maria Theresa should have the Hapsburg states. Almost without warning he invaded the Austrian province Silesia, the long narrow strip of land stretching along the River Oder from Brandenburg to Hungary. Brandenburg had some ancient title to this territory, so Frederick seized it, and then sent word to Maria Theresa that he would support her other claims if she would yield what he had taken.

She indignantly refused his offer, though she sorely needed help. Every state in Europe was turning against her, each clamoring for a slice of the Austrian domains. Most of the German principalities joined France in open war against the queen, and instead of electing her husband as Emperor, chose the Elector of Bavaria, who thus wins a brief and doubtful place among the German Emperors as Charles VII. (1742-1745).

Frederick of Prussia, with the splendid Prussian army, defeated the Austrians in battle after battle, and drove them out of Silesia. His first victory, however, reflects little credit upon him. It was at Mollwitz, and the hurly-burly and confusion seemed, to his inexperienced eye, to show that the battle was lost. "Adieu, gentlemen," he is reported to have said, "I am the best mounted." Urging his horse to flight he took refuge in a flour mill, where he was found by his triumphant general and assured of victory. You may be sure the wits of Europe did not lose the chance of jibing at their brother wit. Voltaire said, "The King emerged from the battle covered with glory—and flour."

The Austrian Queen sought to secure peace, but the demands of Frederick, like those of many another highwayman, rose with his fortunes. He was only superior to most of the sovereigns around him in that he made no hypocritical pretense of honor. "Promises!" he said scornfully to an English ambassador. "Who nowadays pretends to keep them? Does England or France? I have an invincible army. I want Silesia. I have taken it and mean to keep it. Let those who want peace yield me my demands."

The state of affairs began to look disastrous for poor Maria Theresa. Silesia was lost; Bohemia in the hands of the Saxons; Vienna itself almost in the power of French and Bavarians. Charles of Bavaria was proclaimed Duke of Austria as well as Emperor. Only Hungary remained to the Queen. She appeared before the Hungarian parliament looking so fair and so imploring, and withal so brave and resolute, that the people rallied gallantly to her support. When she presented her infant son to the parliament and declared the Hungarians were her only hope, legend says that every sword flashed forth and every voice was raised in a splendid, dramatic oath, "We will die for our ruler, Maria Theresa."

The Empress-Queen, as she came to be called, was finally compelled to surrender Silesia to Frederick, and thus make peace with him. Then foot by foot her generals drove the other foes out of her land, and following them over the border, conquered the whole of Bavaria. Poor Charles VII. died, declaring he had been made a tool by France. His son was given back Bavaria on condition of helping Austria. The French, with England's aid, were forced once more out of Germany; and Maria's husband, Francis of Lorraine, was crowned Emperor as Francis I. (1745-1765).

Francis was never more than a figure head. His wife ruled all the Austrian possessions; and we have seen that the mere title of Emperor had lost all value and significance. The Empress, though loving her husband devotedly, retained the power she had so well earned. The direct descendants of the pair reign in Austria to-day, and the old name of Hapsburg still clings to the family, though technically, of course, they are no longer Hapsburgs, but have become, through Francis, the house of Lorraine.

The successes of Maria Theresa left her only one unconquered enemy; and with dogged resolution she strove, in 1744, to win back Silesia from Prussia. But Frederick had come to the fulness of his power, and, as always during his reign, he read in advance the purpose of his foes and acted while they were still engaged in discussion. From Silesia he advanced suddenly into Bohemia. The old Prince of Dessau, who had made the Prussian army so efficient, was still in Frederick's service, and the two defeated the Austrians in one brilliant battle after another. Yet the credit for Hohenfriedberg, Sora, and Kesseldorf, the three most famous victories of the war, must be given mainly to the Prussian common soldiers. Opposed to overwhelming numbers, the men displayed a steady discipline, a sturdy, unshakable valor, which the Austrians could not match. The Prussians proved to all the world that in them the ancient German spirit was reawakening. The care and wisdom with which Frederick and his ancestors had ruled in peace, he reaped the fullest value of in war.

This "Second Silesian War," as it is called, first won for Frederick, from admirers of military genius, the title of Great. Prussia and Austria had met in fair fight. Indeed, Austria had been aided by Saxony, which was jealous of the growing strength of her neighbor. Yet Prussia, the little, new, scarce-known kingdom had defeated the large, old, and famous one. Henceforth Austria was compelled to acknowledge Prussia as her equal and her rival.



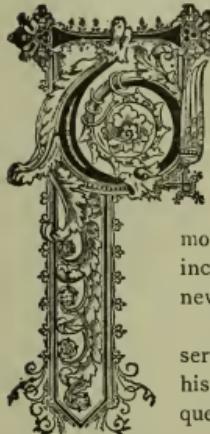
FREDERICK AND THE MILLER OF SANS-SOUCI



FREDERICK WATCHING THE DISASTER AT KUNNERSDORF

Chapter LXIV

FREDERICK'S SEVEN YEARS' WAR



HE eleven years' peace that followed the Silesian wars, was regarded by both Austria and Prussia as merely a time of preparation for further hostilities. Frederick the Great kept up the careful, economical administration of his father. The advantages of the Prussian system, of governing for the good of the people, were clearly shown in Silesia. Instead of remaining, like most conquered lands in history, a sullen and rebellious province, it became loyally Prussian, and clung tenaciously to its new king through all the disasters that followed.

Frederick made himself, as his father had been, the first servant of the state. Every matter passed personally through his hands, and he saw straight into its heart, and settled the question with keen, sarcastic comments. A chamberlain sent him a petition to be allowed to go to the health baths at Aix. The King merely jotted down on the face of the application, "He would gamble away the little money he has, and come back a beggar." A city forwarded a protest against having troops quartered upon it. "Do they think," wrote Frederick on the protest, "I can carry my regiments in my pocket?"

His only pleasure was in his palace of Sans-Souci ("without care"), where he chatted with his French friends, Voltaire and others, and quarrelled with them when they grew too impudent. He wrote orchestral music and led his musicians in playing it, himself performing upon his beloved flute. The music was

not specially brilliant; but neither was it bad, the soul of melody was in the man, and the wonderful musical development of Germany owes something at least to his example and encouragement.

Frederick was the most powerful embodiment of the new progressive ideas of the age, while Maria Theresa was the noblest example of the old, conservative, Catholic spirit. She, too, governed her people well, so that they always looked upon her with love, as a mother as well as a queen. It was said of her, as of the English Elizabeth, that she made every man about her a hero. She never changed; she never forgot. "When I am dead," she is reported to have said, "they will find the word 'Silesia' cut into my heart." Her army was increased and carefully trained upon the Prussian model. Through her chief statesman, Kaunitz, she sought to ally all Europe against Prussia. Gradually a colossal combination was formed to crush the rising state.

Frederick suspected it, struggled against it, delayed the blow for eleven years. At last, in 1756, his spies warned him that the moment was at hand. Without waiting to be attacked he marched suddenly upon Saxony. Austrian troops hurried to Saxony's help, and though Frederick defeated them at Lobositz, the battle was sanguinary and desperate. It became at once apparent that these were new Austrians with whom Frederick had to deal, the equals of his own men in discipline, almost their equals in valor and devotion. The result must depend henceforward not upon men, but upon commanders—and upon numbers.

The Saxon troops, however, were still of the old worthless type. Frederick overwhelmed them with ease, and seized Dresden, the Saxon capital. There he found, as he had expected, proofs of the secret and even treacherous alliance against him, and he published the papers to all the world to justify his sudden attack.

The great monarchies of Europe, Austria, France, and Russia were allied in a scheme to crush Frederick and divide his territory. Sweden, Spain, and the German empire, that is, most of the little German states, had either entered, or soon did enter, the combination against him. England, which included Hanover, and a few allied German states, lent him doubtful and wavering support. Except for that, he stood alone against united Europe.

Nevertheless, the great powers were unready. Saxony was crushed under Frederick's foot, and he spent the winter of 1756 in triumph at the conquered capital. There in the midst of diplomatic efforts for peace and energetic preparations for war, he enjoyed the Dresden opera, gave court fêtes, and attended divine service at both Catholic and Protestant churches. He remained the gay and witty philosopher. If he foresaw the tremendous struggle before him, he gave no sign of weakness or of fear.

With the spring of 1757 he was instantly alert and attacked the Austrians in Bohemia. He put them to flight in one fiercely fought contest; but another army advanced, and he suffered his first repulse at Kollin. A sudden change which he made in his plan of battle brought confusion and defeat. He rushed among his soldiers with desperate courage, beating them with his cane, trying to rally them in face of a murderous fire, crying "You rascals! Do you want to live forever?" But he demanded more than human valor could perform. An officer stopped him as he pushed forward into the front rank. "Your Majesty," he demanded, "do you mean to fight the battle alone?"

The remaining soldiers forced him tenderly from the field. An old guardsman brought him a drink of water in his iron cap, saying, "Never mind, Sire, God and we will yet mend this for you." Few generals have ever won from their men such intense personal devotion and sympathy as he. They understood that Europe meant to crush him and them, and their sorrow, their resolute resistance, seemed as much for his sake as for their own.

The Austrians occupied Silesia. The Russians pushed into East Prussia, defeating the army Frederick had left there. The French, who had been held back by the English in Hanover, made peace there and advanced against him from the west. Each army of the three that surrounded him, far exceeded his own in numbers.

It was when his cause thus seemed hopeless, that the genius of the man shone forth in its greatest splendor. With scarcely twenty thousand Prussian troops, he awaited sixty thousand French and Imperialists at Rossbach (November 5, 1757). So quiet did his forces remain that the French believed he was in despair, and abandoning their strong position, spread out their army so as to encircle him and prevent his escape. From the garret window of an old manor house, Frederick and his generals watched with grim satisfaction the extending and weakening of the enemies' lines. At the proper moment there came a single command from Frederick's lips, and the scene changed like the sudden transformation of a pantomime. The silence burst into volcanic action. The Prussian cavalry charged with whirlwind enthusiasm. The Frenchmen, struck with sudden panic, scarce waited for the attack. So headlong was their flight that they were called "the winged army." Frederick lost less than four hundred men; the French over ten thousand, with all their artillery and baggage, and their army was dispersed beyond regathering.

It was a shameful defeat. It is said that the Austrians themselves exulted in this overthrow of their ancient foes; and every German heart warmed toward Frederick. France has never forgotten that memorable day. More than a century later, in the war of 1870, among the French rallying cries was "Remember Rossbach."

The turn of the Austrians came a month afterward, when Frederick defeated them at Leuthen. It was one of his most magnificent battles, a masterpiece of military strategy against worthy opponents who almost thrice outnumbered his own troops. The battle centred round the old stone church of Leuthen, which was taken and retaken by the contending forces. As night fell the Austrians broke and fled. A Prussian grenadier, standing in the graveyard by the church, raised his voice in solemn thankfulness, chanting the hymn "*Nun danket alle Gott*" (Now let all thank God). The strains were taken up by his comrades, until the entire army stood bareheaded amid the snow of that December night, and in mighty chorus echoed the warlike hymn of thanksgiving to God. Henceforward the solemn singing of that hymn became the established custom of the Prussians after each of the many victories to which their great commander led them.

Napoleon, the most famed of military leaders, has said of Leuthen: "It was a masterpiece of planning, of execution, and of pluck." Over twenty thousand Austrian prisoners fell into Frederick's hands, and almost as many more immediately surrendered at Breslau. His prisoners outnumbered his own forces.

After the battle the Prussians pressed forward so rapidly that Frederick narrowly escaped capture himself. Some of the fleeing Austrians had stopped for the night at Lissa, never dreaming the pursuit would reach so far. There Frederick came unexpectedly upon them. He was followed by but a handful of men, and had his foes known it, was really their prisoner; but he saluted them so coolly that they supposed his army was at his back, and dispersed in hasty flight.

The next year at Zorndorf Frederick defeated the Russians, who were cruelly ravaging East Prussia. This battle of Zorndorf ranks among the most desperately fought in history. The Russians gave no opportunity for Frederick to display his skill in manoeuvring. They simply stood in a vast solid square and awaited his attack. His men were outnumbered as usual—thirty thousand to fifty thousand—and so stubborn was the fight that twenty thousand of the Russians fell before the survivors took to flight. Frederick himself lost a third of his army.

In truth this great commander had reached the point where victory was almost as disastrous to him as defeat. To his relentless foes the loss of an army meant only the raising of another to take its place; but Frederick no longer had recruits from whom to replenish his diminished ranks. He was like an exhausted lion, surrounded by a horde of fierce and hungry wolves, who must wear out his strength at last.

His face began to grow haggard and old; the beauty and brightness of his younger days faded. Only the grim, iron, Hohenzollern soul of the man re-

mained. He would not yield. He began to carry poison round with him, determined not to survive the final catastrophe. He was defeated this year at Hochkirch, and on the same day his beloved sister, Wilhelmina, died.

The next year, 1759, he suffered the worst defeat of his career at Kunnersdorf, from the united Austrians and Russians. For a time the victory seemed Frederick's, but the Prussians, physically worn out, at last gave way. The King had two horses shot under him and a bullet struck him in the breast, but slantingly, and did little injury. He galloped wildly about the field crying out, "Will no ball come to me and end it?" Of all his army barely five thousand men remained to him. Had his foes pressed forward they would have found Berlin and all Prussia at their mercy. Frederick sent word to the capital warning the citizens to look to their own safety, as he had no means of protecting them. The despatch ended, "All is lost. Farewell forever."

But the victors quarrelled among themselves and did not immediately follow him. The English defeated the French in Hanover, and when finally the Austrians and Russians began their delayed advance upon Berlin, they found Frederick with his little army reinforced, and his mighty spirit roused to new hope. Once more he defied them.

The Russian interest in the war began to grow half-hearted. Frederick's subjugation was proving difficult and expensive beyond all calculation. Elizabeth, the sovereign of Russia, had entered the contest through personal hatred of Frederick, roused by his too sarcastic tongue. Her son and heir was, on the contrary, an enthusiastic admirer of the great Prussian king. Elizabeth was failing rapidly in health, and Russian generals could not afford to antagonize their coming sovereign by being too successful against his friend.

Two more years dragged on and still the lion, though ever growing weaker, fought desperately amid his foes. Then Elizabeth died, and at once the Russians changed sides and joined Prussia. Sweden, too, abandoned the struggle. Spain had never taken more than a nominal part in it. Saxony was crushed, the other German states indifferent, and France busy with England. Poor Maria Theresa, her heart bleeding because of the awful cost to her own country, but with "Silesia" still engraved within her breast, determined to fight on alone. It was to be Austria now, against the combined strength of Russia and Prussia.

Before, however, a single battle could be fought, the new Russian monarch was deposed by his wife, and she sent hurried word to her general, Czernichef, to withdraw from the Prussian alliance and remain neutral. Frederick and Czernichef had just completed their preparations to attack the Austrians at Reichenbach. The friendly Russian general put his orders in his pocket. They could not be disobeyed, but, as Frederick pointed out, they need not be

immediately proclaimed to everybody. Frederick himself at once attacked the Austrians. A large force of these remained opposite the Russians, expecting their assault. The remainder were overwhelmed by Frederick and the whole army routed.

Russia took no further part in the war. There were one or two minor Prussian victories, and then Maria Theresa, worn out at last, and convinced that, for her, Frederick was indeed unconquerable, consented to a peace, 1763, by which Prussia retained Silesia. The struggle had been by no means so destructive as the appalling Thirty Years' War. For instance, Berlin itself was at one time in the hands of the enemy, yet it escaped very lightly with a fine and a partial plundering of royal palaces. Nevertheless, a grim and awful responsibility lies with those few ambitious rulers who to satisfy their own petty ambitions or personal spite sacrificed hundreds of thousands of soldiers in battle, and spread even sadder desolation among the poor unfortunates who took no part in the miserable conflict. It is said that in Saxony and Bohemia alone, three hundred thousand peasants perished of starvation.

This truly remarkable struggle, the "Seven Years' War" as it is called, has been dwelt upon at some length, because it is regarded as one of the most memorable in history, both in its events and its results. If we sought the four greatest names in German history before Bismarck, they would probably be given by common consent as Charlemagne, Barbarossa, Luther, and Frederick the Great; and Frederick's fame rests mainly upon this war. For seven years he withstood the assaults of all Europe. Austria put forth every effort against him; and while it is true that his other opponents were at times wavering and divided, still he did in turn fight them all. He gave battle repeatedly to forces three or four times as numerous as his own. His successes were triumphs of genius over force; his defeats almost equally glorious in the courage with which they were endured and repaired.

The Prussians proved themselves a nation of heroes. Never was king so loyally supported. At Zorndorf his famous cavalry general, Seidlitz, disobeyed an order, seeing that thus he could win the victory. Frederick sent him word that his head should answer for his disobedience. "Tell the king," said Seidlitz, "he can have my head after the battle. Now it must be used in his service." The sacrifice of his head was not, however, demanded of him. His attack succeeded and Frederick embracing him on the field of victory admitted that the cavalry leader had been wiser than he. Indeed, Seidlitz and others of Frederick's generals were almost his equals in ability. His brother, Prince Henry, and Marshal Ziethen, won a military fame second only to his own. Before the war the three great powers in Europe were France, Austria, and England. Thereafter two more had to be added—Russia and Prussia.

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